

Program Summary
Arizona Criminal Justice Commission
Victim Compensation and Assistance

Program Overview

The Victim Compensation and Victim Assistance Programs, funded by the Arizona Criminal Justice Commission (ACJC), provide monetary assistance and direct services to crime victims. These programs are operated by local government entities or private non-profit organizations, while ACJC establishes program rules and monitors each program's compliance to the stated victim service-oriented objectives. The Attorney General's office also operates the Victims' Rights Program, which functions in a similar decentralized capacity but with a more significant focus on victim notification.

The Victim Compensation Program provides out-of-pocket compensation to crime victims for specific expenses incurred as a result of their victimization. Eligible reimbursements may include lost wages and medical, funeral, and counseling expenses, with a maximum claim award of \$20,000. In Arizona, the 15 state county attorney's offices assume responsibility for distribution of victim funds provided to the county by ACJC. In order to receive monetary compensation, each victim must file a claim in the county attorney's office where the crime occurred. A victim's claim is investigated and reviewed by each county's volunteer Crime Victim Compensation Board. In FY 2006, the boards approved 1,602 claims, with an average award of \$2,289. As seen in *Table 2*, of the claims submitted, approximately 91% were approved in this year, an increase of 17.6%. Approval of these claims may also be dependent upon availability of funding resources at the time of the claim.

The Victim Assistance Program provides competitive grants to non-profit and government agencies that provide direct crime victim services. Services include crisis intervention, emergency shelter, information and referral services, and other victim support services. Receipt of grant monies for a Victim Assistance Program is determined through a competitive grant process conducted by ACJC. In order to monitor adherence to program policies, ACJC requires that grant recipients submit annual performance reports and quarterly financial reports. In FY 2007, 43 grants were awarded to 17 criminal justice agencies, including 14 county attorneys' offices, 2 police departments, the Arizona Attorney General's Office, and 26 non-profit organizations and other government-operated programs. Of the amount distributed, 99% were for salary and fringe benefits for providers of direct services to victims.

As a result of the Victim Assistance Program, organizations provided services to 43,882 victims in FY 2006, an increase of 58% from the previous year. This increase is primarily due to a change in the method of reporting the number of crime victims to more accurately count the number of individuals served by the program. Prior to FY 2006, the number of victims served was calculated in proportion to the program's funding provided by the Victim Assistance Program; after FY 2006, the reporting was altered to reflect all victims served by positions either fully or partially funded through the Victim Assistance Program. Of these victims, 39% received assistance for domestic violence, followed by assault victims at 12%. Of all services provided, notification services made up 29% and emergency temporary shelter was 12%.

Program Funding

Funding for both programs is mostly derived from the Victim Compensation and Assistance Fund (VCAF), which maintains a sub-account for each program. The Victim Compensation Program also receives federal monies from the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA). No state General Fund monies are provided for either victim program.

In FY 2008, the Victim Compensation Program received total funding of \$3,997,000. Of this amount, the Victim Compensation and Assistance Fund provided \$2,800,000, which is comprised of monies from 3 sources: 4.6% of the Criminal Justice Enhancement Fund (CJEF) distribution, 10% of inmate work fees collected by the State Department of Corrections, and unclaimed victim restitution. Court assessments, which are deposited into CJEF, provide almost two thirds of this fund's revenue for the Victim Compensation Program. All of the fund monies are distributed to the county attorney's offices based on a base dollar amount and an annual commission approved formula, which is based on population. The Victim Compensation Program will also receive an estimated \$1,197,000 in federal VOCA monies in FY 2008. The VOCA allocation matches state funding at 60%.

The state-funded portion of the Victim Compensation Program total funding also includes an increase of \$300,000 in monies obtained through forfeiture from an Arizona firm following a court settlement between the firm and the Arizona Attorney General's Office. A total of \$2,875,000 was deposited into the VCAF,

and ACJC intends to spend \$300,000 per year to provide funding stability to the program.

The Victim Assistance Program received \$1,300,000 in FY 2008 from the VCAF, which is its sole source of ACJC allocated monies. Monies for this program are generated by inmate community supervision fees and parole interstate compact fees. Like the Victim Compensation Program, this program disperses monies to county attorney's offices. As per A.R.S. § 41-2407, no more than 50% of victim assistance monies can be allocated to government agencies. In addition, ACJC rules state that a program can only qualify for victim assistance funding if they can provide a 25% match as a new organization, or a 50% match as an existing organization. In FY 2006, all awards were received by existing organizations.

The FY 2008 funding level for the Victim Compensation program has increased by 19.1% since FY 2001. This growth is attributed to a federal VOCA reimbursement rate increase from a 40% match to a 60% match. VCAF monies declined in FY 2007 due to a decrease in unclaimed victim restitution monies; however, these funds were supplemented in FY 2008 by the forfeiture monies discussed above.

FY 2008 funding for the Victim Assistance Program represents a \$400,000 increase in state funding from FY 2001 levels. *Table 1* displays historical funding information for the Victim Compensation and Victim

Assistance Programs by fund source, using data from FY 2001, FY 2005, FY 2006, FY 2007, and FY 2008.

Performance Measures

Table 2 includes performance measures for the Victim Compensation and Victim Assistance Programs. None of the measures listed in the General Appropriation Act directly address the success of these 2 programs, but rather measure the ability of ACJC to properly monitor recipients' compliance with program rules. Some of the measures listed are currently tracked by ACJC and others are measures recommended for future tracking.

Performance measures listed in *Table 2*, assess performance of both ACJC monitoring and program performance due to ACJC's decentralized role. One of the most important outcomes is the victim satisfaction rating, which provides qualitative insight into the program's success by those who receive services. Although local victim programs collect data to measure customer satisfaction, ACJC noted the difficulty in arriving at a statewide figure because of the disparity between programs and a variety of inconsistent surveys. ACJC indicated that it intends to develop standard, statewide customer satisfaction performance measures, requiring that grantees include these measures in their victim surveys.

Other measures that may be useful to report include:
1) the annual number of victim claims submitted and

Table 1

Victim Compensation and Victim Assistance Funding History					
<u>Victim Compensation</u>	<u>FY 2001</u>	<u>FY 2005</u>	<u>FY 2006</u>	<u>FY 2007</u>	<u>FY 2008</u>
VCAF	\$3,000,000	\$3,000,000	\$3,000,000	\$2,500,000	\$2,800,000
VOCA	357,000	1,305,300	1,340,600	1,304,000	1,197,000
Total	\$3,357,000	\$3,357,000	\$4,340,600	\$3,804,000	\$3,997,000
<u>Victim Assistance</u>					
VCAF Total	\$900,000	\$900,000	\$900,000	\$900,000	\$1,300,000
Total	\$900,000	\$900,000	\$900,000	\$900,000	\$1,300,000

Table 2

Victim Compensation and Victim Assistance Performance Measures					
	<u>FY 2004</u>	<u>FY 2005</u>	<u>FY 2006</u>	<u>FY 2007</u>	<u>FY 2008</u>
<u>Victim Compensation Performance Measures</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Estimate</u>	<u>Estimate</u>
Victim satisfaction with provision of services	--	--	--		
Amount of time required to complete claim processing	7 weeks	6 weeks	6 weeks	6 weeks	6 weeks
Number of victim claims submitted	1,779	1,794	1,769	1,769	1,800
Percent of victim compensation claims approved	77	73	91	91	85
<u>Victim Assistance Performance Measures</u>					
Victim satisfaction with provision of services by providers	--	--	--	--	--
Percent of program audits reflecting no deficiencies	100%	100%	96%	96%	98%
Number of victims receiving assistance	28,844	27,850	43,882	43,882	44,000
Average per victim cost of providing direct services	--	--	--	--	--

the percent approved, which would establish the program's ability and effectiveness at targeting its key audience; 2) the number of program audits with no deficiencies, which establishes program adherence to ACJC rules and a program's ability to provide services, and 3) the average per victim cost and the time required for victim compensation claim processing, which would assess efficiency. A maximum 7-week processing time is currently an ACJC program rule and ACJC has no case backlog. Many other states have backlogs of as many as 6 months.

One suggested performance measure not listed relates to tracking the percent of eligible victims that apply for Victim Compensation or Assistance. Due to some difficulty in tracking and attaining crime reports in local jurisdictions and the fact that many crimes are not reported, eligibility is difficult to determine.